



United States Mint Strikes ‘Granite Lady’ Coins

October 27, 2006

Gold, Silver Coins Honor Stalwart Landmark That Survived City’s 1906 Earthquake

SAN FRANCISCO — Making her entrance in silver, the Granite Lady was once again the center of attention in this city as officials got a glimpse today of the silver commemorative coin honoring the San Francisco Old Mint during a ceremony at the current United States Mint at San Francisco.

Surcharges from the sale of the San Francisco Old Mint Commemorative Coins are authorized to be paid to the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society to rehabilitate the historic San Francisco Old Mint as a city museum and an American coin and gold rush museum.

“I know I speak for everyone at the United States Mint when I say how proud we are to be striking these coins to honor such an important piece of our shared history in San Francisco,” said Gloria C. Eskridge, Associate Director for Sales and Marketing at the United States Mint.

“The Old Mint is a key part of San Francisco’s history and along with history comes a sacred responsibility to preserve and protect it for future generations. Just as the Old Mint’s vaults protected millions of dollars in government gold, these commemorative coins will help preserve our Granite Lady,” said U.S. House of Representatives Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who joined United States Senator Dianne Feinstein, and members of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society as guests of the United States Mint to strike the silver dollars on Friday. “I am proud to have authored legislation to issue Old Mint coins, and to obtain the broad bipartisan support necessary to pass it into law. Today begins a bright new future for the Old Mint.”

Minority Leader Pelosi (San Francisco, CA) and Representative Mike Castle (Delaware) sponsored the commemorative coin legislation in the House of Representatives. Senators Feinstein (California), Barbara Boxer (California) and John Ensign (Nevada) sponsored the bill in the Senate.

“It’s quite fitting that the first United States Mint facility to be featured on a commemorative coin is the San Francisco Old Mint. California has a special relationship to coins because it became a state mainly as a result of the Gold Rush, and the Old Mint in San Francisco was built by the federal government in 1874 to coin gold from the Gold Rush,” Senator Feinstein said. “Coin collectors, Californians, and millions of Americans hold the San Francisco Old Mint in the highest regard as a national treasure.”

In June of this year, President Bush signed into law (Public Law 109–230) a bill authorizing the production and release of two commemorative coins, one in gold and the other in silver, to commemorate the importance of the San Francisco Old Mint, known as the “Granite Lady,” to the history of California and the United States, and to recognize its role in rebuilding San Francisco following the 1906 earthquake and fires.

A San Francisco branch of the United States Mint was authorized in 1852 to convert California Gold Rush miners’ gold into coins. The San Francisco Old Mint building opened in 1874 and is the second building in San Francisco to house a United States Mint production facility (the current location is the third building).

When an earthquake and subsequent fire struck the city in April 1906, employees of the United States Mint used water from an artesian well on the grounds to save the building from flames. The solid construction of the “Granite Lady” enabled it to survive the disaster relatively intact, making it the only financial institution able to operate immediately after the earthquake as the Treasury for disaster relief funds for the city of San Francisco. The building became a National Historic Landmark in 1961.

“The Granite Lady will be restored to its original 1874 state of glory, and the entire space will be open to the public for the first time in the building’s history,” said Erik Christoffersen, the Executive Director of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society. “It will be the home to the first dedicated museum where San Franciscans, Bay Area residents, and visitors from around the world can come to learn how San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area came to be what it is today.”

The obverse design of the \$5 gold coin is a rendition of the Old Mint modeled on the original architectural rendering by A. B. Mullett. The gold obverse inscriptions are: “Liberty,” “1906,” “San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Centennial,” “E Pluribus Unum” and “2006.”

The design of the \$5 gold reverse is a reproduction of the 1906 Half-Eagle Coronet Liberty eagle reverse, designed by Christian Gobrecht. The gold reverse displays the inscriptions, “United States of America,” “In God We Trust” and “Five D.”

The obverse design of the \$1 silver coin is a rendition of the San Francisco Old Mint, originally prepared for the San Francisco Mint Medal by Sherl J. Winter. The silver dollar obverse inscriptions read, “Liberty,” “1906 ~ 2006,” “E Pluribus Unum,” “Old Mint, “The Granite Lady”” and “Instrumental in San Francisco’s Recovery.” The reverse is a replica of the 1904 Morgan Silver Dollar eagle reverse, designed by George T. Morgan. The silver reverse displays the inscriptions, “United States of America,” “In God We Trust,” and “One Dollar.”

The United States Mint offers the San Francisco Old Mint Commemorative Coins in both proof and uncirculated qualities. The \$5 gold coin has a mintage of up to 100,000, while the \$1 silver coin has a mintage limit of up to 500,000.

The Proof \$5 Gold Coin is available for \$255 and the Uncirculated \$5 Gold Coin for \$245. The Proof Silver Dollar is available for \$39 and the Uncirculated \$1 Silver Coin for \$35.

For images of the San Francisco Old Mint Commemorative Coins, [please click here](#).

Customers can order the San Francisco Old Mint Commemorative Coins by using the United States Mint’s secure website, www.usmint.gov, or by calling 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468). Hearing- and speech-impaired customers may order by calling 1-888-321-MINT (6468). A shipping and handling fee of \$4.95 per order will be added to all domestic orders.

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